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RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON IMMEDIATE 0262

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 000833

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR KHALILZAD AND P-3 MEET WITH THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

1.(C) SUMMARY. Permanent Representatives of the U.S., U.K., and France urged Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon to send a comprehensive humanitarian and human rights fact finding mission to Georgia and to sign a UN-NATO Declaration on cooperation. On Georgia, Ban said he had approved a mission that would depart on September 16 for Moscow, but that the Russian Federation had not granted visas to the two team members who were to examine human rights issues. A UN human rights official subsequently received a visa to join the team. Ban agreed to consider a follow-on mission if the current mission was unsuccessful in getting sufficient access to South Ossetia. Ban was optimistic that Russia would agree to a 3-4 month extension of the current UNOMIG mandate. He also thought the UN should have a role in the political discussions that will take place in Geneva in mid-October. On the UN-NATO Declaration, Ban told Ambassador Khalilzad privately he would sign the Declaration, but preferred to do it without fanfare. Ban said he would coordinate plans with the NATO SYG. Ban previewed some appointments, and discussed arrangements for a Burma Ministerial. END SUMMARY.

Georgia

2.(C) The P-3 pressed Secretary General Ban Ki Moon to quickly send a comprehensive humanitarian and human rights fact-finding mission to Georgia, including South Ossetia and Abkhazia, in order to assess needs and look into allegations of human rights abuses. Ban said a UN mission was leaving for Georgia on September 16. Ban agreed with the P-3 that the UN mission should include a human rights component. He said he had included two representatives from the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in a list of team members that had been sent to Moscow. Russia had not yet approved the visas for the two individuals who would be involved in the human rights fact-finding aspect of the mission. Ban also said the scope of the mission had originally been more ambitious, and would have included political issues, but was cut back after SRSG-designate Verbekes's meetings with Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov. Note. U/SYG for Humanitarian Affairs John Holmes told Ambassador Wolff subsequently that Russia ultimately issued a visa for a human rights officer. End Note.

3.(C) The P-3 warned Ban that by allowing Russia to dictate the terms of the mission, Russia could then portray the mission as a joint UN-Russia humanitarian venture. Ambassador Khalilzad noted that the UN should not be negotiating with Russia over the composition of staffing for the Secretary-General's mission. The French PermRep raised the possibility of a trip by the SYG's Special Envoy for Genocide, Francis Deng. Ban agreed it was his prerogative to decide who would be in the mission, and that it should not be a joint mission with the Russians. He said he would consider a possible role for Deng, but made no commitments.

4.(C) Ban said he had also spoken to French Foreign Minister Kouchner about the UN role in the political discussions that will take place in Geneva in mid-October. Ban and Kouchner agreed that the UN, and in particular the UNOMIG mission, should play a role, along with the EU and OSCE. Ban understood that the French were proposing a two-room formula for the meeting; one with the Georgian government, and one with representatives of the South Ossetia and Abkhazia de-facto authorities. Ban believed a 3-month technical rollover of the current UNOMIG mission, due to expire on October 15, would be the best solution to give time for the Geneva process to get underway. Ban was not sure if the Russian Federation would be in favor of an extension, but SRSG-designate Verbeke was optimistic that the Russians would want to show flexibility. Ban raised the possibility that the P-5 breakfast on September 26 should focus on Georgia, as it would be an opportunity to confirm the building blocks for the political dialogue.

NATO-UN Declaration

5.(C) The P-3 urged Ban to move ahead with signing a Draft Declaration on UN-NATO Cooperation during the General Debate, as had been earlier agreed between the NATO and UN Secretaries-General. The Ambassadors raised concerns that NATO had been informed by the Department of Political Affairs that Ban had decided to delay signing the document. Ban answered that he was concerned about the risks to UN peacekeeping missions by the implied obligation to provide mutual assistance in extremis. He also mentioned the report of Lakhdar Brahimi issued in 2007 in response to the car

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bombing of the UN mission in Algiers, which concluded that the UN is increasingly perceived as being partial to U.S. and European interests. Additionally, Ban said UNDP in Afghanistan is concerned that the local population does not distinguish between UN assistance workers and international peacekeepers; UNDP workers were therefore at risk. The P-3 Ambassadors pointed out that attacks against UN personnel were not the result of our written understandings on cooperation. Ambassador Khalilzad asked Ban to clarify whether he was implying by the delay in signing that he is not entirely committed to or intends to renegotiate the document. Ban said he was committed to the Declaration, but he had been advised to approach it cautiously.

6.(C) In a separate, follow-on meeting with Ambassador Khalilzad, Ban said he would sign the Declaration, but he preferred to do it without fanfare. Ban said he would call NATO SYG de Hoop Scheffer to discuss it. Ambassador Khalilzad suggested the General Debate might be a good time to avoid the fanfare, as there would be other issues and events competing for media attention.

Burma and New Appointments

7.(U) On Burma, SYG Ban said he would like to hold a ministerial meeting on September 27, believing that September 29 would be too late, because many ministers would have departed by then.

8.(U) Ban also told the Ambassadors he would appoint Srgjan Kerim as a Special Envoy on Climate Change along with the former Chilean President Lagos. Ban plans to announce the appointments on Friday, September 19. Khalilzad